

dren under 16 years of age are exempted from the head tax, but are subject to the visa fee. These charges automatically cut off a large portion of the Mexican immigration stream. There is also in Mexico a movement to discourage emigration to the United States. The increased activity of immigration inspectors tends likewise to reduce the number of illegal entrants.

The steady improvement of conditions in Mexico, including the establishment of rural schools, is also doing much to make the Mexican contented at home. Although he now has friends and relatives in the United States, he does not come here because he loves this country, but rather to better his economic condition and to secure educational advantages for his children.

#### MEXICAN CITIZENSHIP PREFERRED

The Mexican rarely becomes a naturalized American citizen. There are at least two reasons for this. One is that the homeland is never far away; the other that he is not sure whether he would be fairly treated if he threw his lot permanently with this country. He sees too much injustice meted out to his people. Last year in one

consular district alone in Texas twenty-two young men, born and educated in the United States, walked into the Mexican Consul's office and declared themselves citizens of Mexico. These young men had just reached 21 years of age. They had never lived in Mexico, but they were so doubtful that they would receive just treatment in the United States that they did not have faith enough to inspire them to become citizens of the United States, but preferred to risk the future as Mexicans.

The situation along our Mexican border is complex and it will never be anything else. It demands mutual understanding and a sense of fair play. Difference in language is a handicap to fraternity. We need desperately a genuinely bilingual border. Any progress in teaching Spanish to citizens of the United States and teaching English to Mexicans is a real social gain. The Mexican is here to stay, and his children's children will be with us so long as the United States is a country. A man may desert his wife and abandon his children, but the United States can never run away from Mexico. If we will, we shall find Mexico worthy of better understanding and abiding friendship.

## Other Aspects of the Problem

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IT was two decades ago, in a steaming jungle of the Vera Cruz hinterland. British mills were in the neighborhood and most of their peons understood English. An American sociologist, seeing a peon with a bunch of deliciously ripe bananas, asked the cost of a dozen. There was bargaining back and forth in the good old Mexican style, and the price was finally fixed at 10 centavos, about 5 American cents. Imagine the sociologist's surprise when he was handed the entire banana bunch. The Mexican then shouted to some companions squatted in the shade of a nearby adobe: "I skinned this Gringo out of diez (ten) centavos for the bunch." His boast was significant. He had not only gained nearly a third of a day's wages

through a stroke of his machete and five minutes' skillful bargaining; he had in addition the joy of contemptuously calling his victim "Gringo."

The term "Gringo" goes back to a time when a few tall blond Scots served Chile in the War of Liberation from Spain. These often sang Bobby Burns's song "Green Grow the Rushes, Oh." Thus "Green-grows," now "Gringos," came to contain the south-of-the-Rio-Grande *mestizo's* concept of race consciousness in contrasting himself with his tall, blond Northern neighbor.

The Mexican peon does not love the Gringo. He does, however, like Anglo-Saxon living standards. His kind, therefore, is pouring over the border in an almost del-

## DANGER OF UNRESTRICTED



Mexicans who fled during the revolution to the United States border, awaiting admission to this country

uge-like stream. They fill the vacuum caused by the Quota act's barring of European labor. They come in third, in fourth hand Fords, often held together by baling wire. They bring along their women, their children. Why should they not move into the land of stable government? North of the line are no bloodthirsty Villas, no forced conscription. Then, too, there is the generous wage standard. Though the Mexican daily wage is no longer the 17 cents American gold of 1908, it is, however, still far below the American standard of living. Because of his eagerness to earn the north-of-the-line wage, the Mexican remains not merely a cheap laborer. He is even more. He is a docile laborer and will live uncomplainingly under conditions which disclose his Indian origins.

It is principally the low-caste Mexican, or "Amerind," who comes to us. The "white" Mexican never steals by night across the border, and when he comes it is seldom for permanent residence. He can live too comfortably at home on the labor of scores of peons, who are virtually slaves.

When one declares that the Mexican peon is intellectually low-powered, one does not fail in appreciation of the Aztec, the Toltec, the Maya, the Inca Amerind civilizations.

It is one of the tragedies of history that these were destroyed. Apparently, the intellectual castes of these civilizations were those of the warrior, the priest. These proud men resisted the Spaniard to the death. Against his firearms, against his cavalry they opposed the weapons of an obsidian culture and were annihilated. It was only the peon slaves, attached to soil owned by the priestly and warrior castes, which persisted. They were docile then, and they remain docile today.

Intelligence tests made of California school children have shown that the Mexican children are of markedly low-powered intellect. They tested uniformly far below those of American stock, ranking with the negro, the Portuguese, the Sicilian. Thus the peon trek into the Great Valley of California and our border States brings an addition to our population that is unfortunately not only racially different, but also intellectually inferior. It is also a group that is most fecund. Recently a Los Angeles Mexican applied for charity funds to provide hair cuts for his thirty-three children. This is, of course, an extreme case. By the fourth generation, however, he would, at the same rate, become the progenitor of 1,185,921 descendants. In other words, it

do. At a large Western State Mexican family prize, to a family of fifteen children, and the prize, to another Mexican family of fourteen children.

Once we believed that these Mexicans could be Americanized. However, a study of conditions in New Mexico by the late Gino Speranza challenges this. New Mexico became American territory at the close of the Mexican War, and American institutions, including the public school, followed our flag into this area. Nearly eighty years have since passed. Yet, wrote Mr. Speranza: "It cost the New Mexican House during one recent session one-fifth of its appropriations for employes for translators and interpreters." That item, he declared, "means that there are members, duly elected to the Lower House of New Mexico, who today cannot transact their legislative business in English."

The eugenic menace of the introduction of a low-powered yet rapidly breeding group into our population mass is, of course, profoundly serious. Expert estimates of the number of Mexicans now living in the United States indicate a Mexican population of from three to four millions. The eugenic effect will, of course, be felt, but slowly. A more apparent and immediate consequence is the displacement of the white laborer by the Mexican peon. In some sections signs are being actually displayed, "No white labor wanted. Only Mexicans need apply." An Eastern professor recently declared that we are witnessing the passing of the Nordic farmer in the West, and one big Western land-owner even boasts that his estates are farmed by Mexicans under Japanese foremen. The Mexican, with his low living standards, is a tremendous burden to our relief agencies. Our border cities are becoming surrounded with Mexican slum belts, and our relief costs are mounting because the peon requires relief out of all proportion to his numbers. Judge Box, author of the bill to restrict Mexican immigration,

which is now before Congress, recently issued a statement that Los Angeles, with a population approximately 5 per cent. Mexican, shows Mexican charity case percentages as follows: Outdoor Relief Division, 27 per cent.; Catholic Charities Bureau, 53.3 per cent.; General Hospital, 43 per cent.; City Maternity Service, 62½ per cent.

It is the problem of sanitation, however, that may most quickly jolt the American public into a realization of the menace of unrestricted Mexican immigration. Vincente Espinosa's case is typical. Two Espinosa children contracted smallpox. Their home was quarantined. Vincente had, however, the Mexican passion for gambling, and despite the quarantine, he slipped out to the pool room. Two men contracted the disease from him. Both died. Before dying, they passed the disease on to ten others. Of these three more died. Vincente was sentenced to thirty days in jail. These five deaths illustrate the need of a quota.

San Francisco's Commonwealth Club scientifically studied the problem of displacement of racial groups within a nation through the influx of the immigrants of low economic standards, and it reports that, had America admitted no immigrants since 1800, we not only would have practically the same manpower that we have today, but that it would be racially homogeneous. We would not have become partially Balkanized. If this be true, America today faces the question of bringing Mexico under the quota law if she wishes to conserve her present racial elements or by continuing unrestricted Mexican immigration, allowing the injection of another color group. If the latter, can we escape further hybridization of the American stock and will not the newcomers even actually displace it in part? The negro population of America at the time of the Revolution was perhaps half a million. Today we have about 10,000,000 negroes. Even if Mexico were placed under the Quota law today and if no peons were deported in the future, we would already have the nucleus of a color problem, which, according to estimates, is six to eight times as large as the negro nucleus was in 1776. If we fail to place Latin America under the quota, what will the Americans of tomorrow say about those of us who are "carrying on" today?